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City of Milwaukee Health Department Supports WI Supreme Court Ruling Allowing Teen to Sue Paint Industry

Today's Wisconsin Supreme Court ruling affirming that paint companies may be held liable for damages incurred from lead poisoning is a victory for public health. The court upheld the risk-contribution theory, which allows people harmed by a defective product to sue a wide range of manufacturers to seek a remedy for their injuries.

"This ruling confirms that the legal community and public health must continue to work together to safeguard the health of Milwaukee children," said Bevan K. Baker, Commissioner of Health.

In 2004, 9.8% of children in Milwaukee were lead poisoned, which is five times the national average. Lead poisoning disproportionately affects lower income, inner-city populations. Lead poisoning causes long-term health problems in children, including:

- Learning disabilities
- Behavioral problems
- Lower IQ points

Families of lead poisoned children are not only overburdened with the medical costs associated with the disease, but also the long-term impact of potential loss of income because of cognitive disorders and intelligence deficits.

For more information on lead poisoning prevention visit the City of Milwaukee Health Department website at www.milwaukee.gov/health

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